



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: April 23, 2020

Agenda Item: Montana Elk Management Plan Process

Action Needed: Endorsement

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 30 minutes

Background:

The Elk Management Plan that FWP currently operates under was adopted in 2005. After 15 years, changes have occurred that have necessitated updating and developing a new Elk Management Plan. Therefore, FWP would like to initiate the process to develop Montana's new Elk Management Plan. The initial step in the process will be to assemble a citizens group. The citizens group will be diverse and represent multiple stakeholder perspectives. The task of the citizens group will be to define an overarching elk issue statement and some meaningful and enduring principles. This will be accomplished using a facilitated process. Once the task is completed by the citizens group, the group will disband, and future steps in the process will be achieved using broad public input. Applications for participation in the citizens group will be publicly available, and individuals interested in elk management will be encouraged to apply. Final selection of individuals who will participate in the citizens group will be made by the FWP director. The elk management issue statement and guiding principles will be proposed to the commission for adoption prior to initiating following steps in the planning process. Subsequent steps in the process will involve broad and extensive public outreach and scoping using statewide public meetings, listening sessions, and online surveys.

Public Involvement Process & Results:

FWP has not formally sought public comment at this time. If endorsed, FWP will begin the first piece of the planning process, which includes developing and seeking input from a citizens group. The broader public will have opportunity to comment on resulting products from the citizens group during the commission process, once proposed. Public input is valued and will be utilized throughout plan development. FWP will continue to use the commission process to update the public.

Alternatives and Analysis:

The proposed Elk Management Plan process may be endorsed as proposed, altered with suggestions, or no action may be taken.

Proposed Motion:

I move the commission endorse proceeding with the development of a new Montana Elk Management Plan.